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Reconsidering Respect: Its Role in the British Prison Service

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Reconsidering Respect: Its role in Her Majesty's Prison Service

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Abstract

This paper examines the meaning of respect in the interpersonal relationships within Her Majesty's Prison Service. It is argued that respect-as-esteem and respect-as-consideration are often confused and unequally emphasised in modern society. This confusion is especially evident within the prison context where due to the Prison Service's 'decency agenda', the respectful treatment of inmates has become a topical issue. What does respect mean in prison? Why is it important? How can respectful relationships be established between staff and inmates? This paper discusses these questions and proposes that there are different forms of respect possible between people. It is argued that there needs to be a recognition of the nuances of meaning when we use the word respect and that 'respect-as-consideration' may be the form of respect most consistently achievable, at the present time, within interpersonal relationships in English and Welsh prisons.

Keywords: Respect; Prison; Legitimacy; Sense of Self; and Shame.

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Current Prison Service policy is concerned with putting forward a ‘decency agenda’, where staff endeavour to make prisons more humane places by being more sensitive to the individual needs and well-being of inmates (HM Prison Service, 2004).

“The Decency Agenda is about having a whole range of processes in place, which are run properly and fairly, where prisoners know that they’re run properly and fairly. And that they’re part of a system, albeit they’re serving a sentence, but which is fair and decent and proper and above board and non-corrupt and polite, where possible, and one that is addressing their resettlement needs as far as it possibly can.”¹

Within the Decency Agenda there is both an implicit and explicit reference to the respectful treatment of inmates. In order for the Decency Agenda to be implemented in a practical way, better clarification of the meaning of respect in interpersonal relationships and its importance to the management of humane and decent prisons is needed. This paper deals with the meaning of respect in interpersonal relationships by examining the concept of respect in English and Welsh prisons, the consequences of disrespect and possible explanations for why respectful treatment is so important within the prison environment. It is argued that the modern usage of the word respect confuses respect-as-consideration with respect-as-esteem and it is this confusion which results in the difficulty of promoting the respectful treatment of inmates. It is proposed that respect-as-consideration is, within the present prison service, the most appropriate form of respectful treatment within prison as it can provide clear guidelines on social interactions for both staff and inmates alike. Such respectful treatment can enhance the perceived legitimacy of the prison and impact upon the inmate’s sense of self. This paper suggests that respectful treatment, and its impact

¹ This quote is from an interview by Deb Drake with a senior manager in Her Majesty’s Prison Service.

upon a inmate's sense of self, may be particularly important for those experiencing shame and humiliation, and who may already feel devalued by society.

The Prison Service's Statement of Purpose outlines the rights of inmates, stating that it will provide a safe and well-ordered environment where inmates are treated humanely, decently, and lawfully (HM Prison Service 2004). The declaration and recognition that inmates have these rights, and the Prison Service's subsequent duty to uphold them, create a starting point for the examination of the role of respect, and its importance in English and Welsh prisons. Sparks and Bottoms (1995) stated that in order to treat inmates humanely, they must be treated with respect and care, and be given hope for their futures. The former Director General of the Prison Service, Joe Pilling (1992) argued that treating inmates humanely involved treating them with respect, fairness, individuality, care, and openness. Liebling (2004) also developed definitions of humanity and decency within the prison context. According to Liebling, humanity is defined as: "An environment characterized by kind regard for the person, mercy and civility, which inflicts as little degradation as possible" (p226). Decency is defined as : "The extent to which prisoners can keep themselves and their living area clean, spend time out of their cells, and have access to privacy" (p331). From these definitions, it would seem, that humanity and decency go hand-in-hand with respect even though the Prison Service does not explicitly use the word 'respect' in their Statement of Purpose. Pilling (1992), however, recognised the role of respect within the Prison Service's Statement of Purpose and encouraged prison staff to engage in respectful relationships with inmates. Pilling argued that there are consequences to disrespectful relationships within prisons and suggested disrespect could undermine security and order. Before discussing the consequences and benefits of respectful

treatment of inmates, a discussion of the meaning of respect more generally and its application in the prison context is required.

The Meaning of Respect

Prison staff are in the confusing position of having to treat inmates with respect without benefit of a sufficient definition of the word respect. Liebling (2004) defined respect in prisons as “An attitude of consideration; to pay proper attention to and not violate. Regard for the inherent dignity and value of the human person” (p212). Nonetheless, there is some confusion about what is really intended when people speak of ‘respect’ as demonstrated by one inmate:

“I think the respect you get you earn. People are either prepared to respect you or they are not, I mean everyone deserves respect purely by the fact that they are human, I mean I respect you, not because you are female but because you are human. Everyone should respect everyone no matter what colour they are, or what they are because everyone deserves life”².

The above quotation illustrates a fundamental problem with our common usage of the concept of ‘respect’: that there are multiple meanings and attributions to what is meant when we use a complex word such as ‘respect’. Perhaps the most straightforward way of considering the concept of respect is to think about what ‘respect for others’ means. However, even within this context, respect has different meanings. A political philosopher Lord Quinton (1991) has highlighted the need to disentangle the modern usage³ of the word respect. He argued that respect, as used today, has four different meanings. These are: respect as reverence; respect-as-esteem or deference;

² All inmate quotes in this paper are taken from the preliminary findings of Michelle Butler’s PhD Thesis.

³ We have elected to consider the semantics of respect within modern usage rather than colloquial, gendered, or cultural usage for the sake of relative clarity.

respect as bare consideration for others; and respect as the avoidance of degrading or insulting treatment. He stated that respect as reverence was appropriate to only a handful of people, while respect-as-esteem or deference can only, reasonably, be given to a minority. Respect, as the avoidance of insulting and degrading treatment, was viewed as a special case of respect as the bare consideration for others. However, these four types of respect appear to fall into two general forms of respect: respect-as-esteem (reverence and deference) and respect-as-consideration (recognition of another's rights as a human being and avoidance of degrading treatment). This paper now turns to developing the notions of respect-as-esteem versus respect-as-consideration in order to highlight the differences between these two quite different forms of respect.

Respect-as-Esteem

Rawls (1971) theorised that respect is not something we are morally required to have but is instead an entitlement that social institutions, and policies, are required by justice to support and maintain. Rawls argued that respect is a primary good which everyone craves as it is essential to the quality of our lives and to our ability to be able to achieve our goals. Rawls goes on to state that respect is a social good which people only acquire under certain social conditions, and that our access to respect is to a large extent dependent upon how the basic institutional structure of our society defines, and distributes, the social basis of respect. In the words of one inmate:

“I think rich people are respected more than poor people, I think it is like that because of the Tory government because of the way they ran things and talked about things. Most things are political and I think it all changed years ago when Margaret Thatcher said it wasn't okay for people to live in council

houses and everyone should own their own house and better themselves and I think it has all changed since then. People were happy to live in council houses, have second-hand cars, work in factories and go on their holiday to the Isle of Wight and silly things like that while now everyone wants a brand new car, good job, don't want to live in a council estate, even if they buy their council house, they only live in it for a few more years and then they sell it and go to a private estate because of the stigma attached to living in state properties”

In other words, the structure and functions of the institutions, and policies, within our society influence who is respected by conveying messages about the relative worth of citizens through access to political rights, civil liberties, resources, and norms governing public interaction between citizens. Modern discourses tend to equate being independent, able to look after yourself and your family, and being successful with aspects of a person's character. Status is therefore perceived as being associated with a person's character or personality (Sennett, 2003, de Botton, 2004). Due to this celebration of success and independence, respect-as-esteem has been over emphasised. People dependent upon the welfare state are not deemed worthy of respect because they are not perceived as successful, independent, hard-working people. Society views their dependency on the state as a failure resulting from their character or personality. They are lazy and unmotivated, and need to be shamed into making something of themselves. In the words of one inmate “A man that can't work or can't provide for his family, he's not a man”. Within this social environment, dependent people are not deemed to be worthy of respect (respect-as-esteem, that is) in our society.

Respect-as-esteem must be earned or bestowed upon another person (usually on an individual basis) due to his or her position, status, actions, or as a result of personal conduct or achievement. This form of respect may have a more emotional element to it which typically builds up over a period of time and is based upon our perception of the quality of another person's character (Quinton, 1991). Sennett (2003) argued that in the modern welfare state, we tend to think of respect as treating others as our equal. However, Sennett is unhappy with this and convincingly argues that this view of respect prevents us from respecting those people whom we perceive as being below us in status. This tendency to associate respect with status highlights one of this paper's main points about the meaning of respect, namely that in modern society, respect-as-esteem is over-emphasised in public discourse.

Sennett (2003) spoke of three criteria by which society deems people worthy of respect. The first criteria is through self-development. People who make the most of their abilities are respected because society values the efficient use of resources, both in the economy and in personal experiences, and condemns the waste of resources (Weber, 1930). The second criteria is caring for ones' self and not becoming a burden on others. A needy, dependent person is perceived as shameful in our western culture because of our society's fear of "being sucked dry by unjustified demands" (Sennett, 2003; p64). Lastly, we may obtain respect through helping others. These criteria give the impression that only hard working, efficient, resourceful, successful, independent, and helpful people are respectable. Contemporary public discourses celebrate success and tend to state that anyone can become successful, if they are motivated and willing to work hard. The result of this is to perpetuate a very specific set of beliefs about

what respect means: that is, that not all people are worthy of respect, that respect needs to be earned, and that people can forfeit their right to respect.

Unfortunately, these beliefs make it difficult for society to perceive individuals dependent upon the state, in particular inmates, as being worthy of respect. Wacquant (2001) argues that prison has become an “instrument for the management of dispossessed and dishonoured groups” (p87) who are a surplus force in the labour market. This is not to say that inmates are not entitled to respect-as-esteem, but rather the nature of prison makes the achievement of respect-as-esteem difficult. The following quote illustrates these difficulties: “A fundamental problem for staff in prisons is that it is not possible for them, anymore than for anyone else, to manufacture respect for an individual who has just forfeited that respect in such a formal way” (Jenkins 1991: 85). A number of realities of the prison world make it difficult for respect-as-esteem to grow between inmates and prison officers: the authoritarian environment, the status of inmates as criminals, the role of officers as warders, and the implicitly paternalistic environment of prisons. That is not to say that respect-as-esteem must be based on equality or that it can only occur if one party is venerated by the other. Indeed, respect-as-esteem can occur between people of unequal statuses and positions. For example, between the inmate and the prison officer who has exercised legitimate discretion, or between the prison officer and the inmate who has just learned to read and write. The fundamental problem in prisons (and in the welfare state as well) is the lack of “provision of autonomy within dependency” (see Sennett 2003: 176). That is, there is something fundamentally disrespectful about treating someone as “a passive recipient of care” (ibid). Prison by its nature reduces the occurrence of respect-as-esteem by reducing the opportunities

for inmates to act autonomously and as a result it is difficult for them to earn the respect of officers. However, there is another form of respect, to which everyone is entitled and can be more easily incorporated into Prison Service professional practice: respect-as-consideration.

Respect-as-Consideration

Numerous philosophers have argued that it is a fundamental right of all human beings to be treated with respect (Kant, 1964; Rousseau, 1988). Kant was the first philosopher to place respect, both for others and for ourselves, at the centre of his moral theory. For Kant, human beings possess an inherent dignity due to our rationality and autonomy, which deserves to be respected. According to Kant, humans are ends in themselves and should not be used as means. Humans by their nature deserve to be respected. Kant's ideas became the core of modern humanism and political liberalism.

Respect-as-consideration might be seen as the most basic form of respect and is the recognition that in a civil society we should treat one another in a polite, courteous and considerate manner. Respect defined in this way need not be earned; it is an implicit entitlement in good/right human relationships (Kant, 1964; Rawls, 1971; & Hill 2004). Drawing on the work of Kant and Rawls, Lord Quinton (1991) proposed that all persons are entitled to respect-as-consideration. Sennett (2003) suggested that everyone is entitled to respect, in the form of respect-as-consideration, regardless of differences between people. Equality is not necessary for respectful treatment to occur; it should be a fundamental human right to be treated in a respectful and considerate manner. The importance of respect-as-consideration in the prison context

is implicitly highlighted in Liebling's (2004) definition of respect in prisons, which states that it is an attitude of consideration for others. It is the position of this paper that this basic level of respect – respect-as-consideration – is the definition that should be highlighted as the standard of treatment in Prison Service training and discourse. Emphasising this form of respect merely requires officers to treat inmates with courtesy by being considerate and polite and avoiding insulting and degrading treatment. Such officers are perceived by the inmate population as being

“very down to earth, they go out of their way to understand your point of view or if you need something they will explain why you can't get it instead of saying 'No' and basically they make the time to chat to you, they are quite compassionate without being soft”

This paper does not mean to suggest that this does not already happen in most prisons across the country. However, there is confusion between the different forms of respect in society more generally and a proper definition of the respectful treatment of inmates is absent in the Prison Service literature.⁴ As a result, a more definitive understanding of the practical application of respectful treatment and the consequences of disrespectful treatment are needed.

The Consequences of Disrespect

When absent, respect can carry with it a particularly damaging effect because when our basic standards of treatment are not being met (when we do not feel respected), we feel devalued and unfairly treated (Miller 2001: 531). Disrespectful treatment within the prison context can have especially detrimental results because feeling

⁴ In addition, we feel the recognition that people apply different meanings to the word 'respect' and that it can take different forms has not been adequately addressed in either the academic or political literature which discusses respect and decency in prisons.

devalued may already be a common daily experience for inmates which may then become amplified when basic respect is lacking. Indeed Edgar, O'Donnell, and Martin (2002) stated that "Respect becomes particularly important in prison when one has little else" (p138). Further, disrespectful treatment can manifest itself in anger and even violence. Miller argues: "the perception that one has been treated disrespectfully is widely recognized as a common, perhaps the most common, source of anger" (p. 532).

Indeed, numerous researchers have argued that violent behaviour towards others arises from the anger a person experiences when they feel that they have been slighted or disrespected (see Gaylin, 1984; Scheff and Retzinger, 1991; Storr, 1991; Gilligan, 1996; Barbalet, 1998; & Gilligan, 2001). Slighting involves any behaviour that shames people by treating them with disrespect - as if they are unimportant or insignificant. It follows that if inmates and officers behave disrespectfully towards each other, a variety of problems might arise within the prison, including disturbances, control incidents, non-compliance, violence, and other difficulties. In fieldwork conducted by the first author, an inmate who had been treated disrespectfully by a prison officer stated:

"He shouldn't be allowed to treat you like that. I know what you are saying and I do my best to ignore it but some days you can't help yourself, and you just snap. Inmates think different[ly]. They are going to pull a tool and do some real damage to him [the person who behaved disrespectfully]."

Edgar et al. (2002) found that feeling disrespected was a common reason given for inmates' involvement in prison violence. Inmates were particularly likely to engage in

violence if they felt that their sense of self was being threatened or questioned (ibid).

One inmate spoke of his experiences with other inmates, he said:

“They will say stuff like “Go s**k your Mother”. That is totally disrespectful and it just causes fights, do you know what I mean? Cause I know if someone said that to me I wouldn’t be standing there talking to them about the if’s and but’s about it, it would be going off!”

It appears therefore that respect plays an important role in the order and security of a prison because it tells us something about our status, or social standing, as perceived by others (Miller, 2001). For example, if a prison officer behaves respectfully towards a inmate, it indicates, to the inmate, that the prison officer perceives them as being human and worthy of respect. On the other hand, if the prison officer behaves disrespectfully towards the inmate, it indicates to the inmate, that they are perceived as being subhuman and not worthy of respect. One inmate spoke about how he felt disrespected by people “not knowing who I am, thinking that I’m, I’m, I’m a nobody”. Another inmate stated:

“How dare they speak to me like that! They have no respect for you so it’s not surprising that we talk to them the way we do. They think they are better than us just because they have keys but they forget that they are paid to be our lackeys, to lock us up and unlock us, and to get us what we want. But they forget that. If they talk to me like that then of course I’m going to square up to them. They’re not going to get away with treating me like that. I don’t care what they do to me, I’m already in prison and I’d prefer to do more time for hitting them than to ignore them and have them disrespect me”

Of course, this is also relevant for interactions between inmates, prison officers and civilian prison staff.

In a review of the riots at Strangeways, Lord Woolf stated “A recurring theme in the evidence from the prisoners who may have instigated, and who were involved in, the riots was that their actions were a response to the manner in which they were treated by the prison service” (1991; para. 9.24). Lord Woolf (1991) concluded that the perceived legitimacy of the prison regime had an important influence over the occurrence of disorders in prison. When people feel they are being fairly treated, they are more likely to be cooperative and to comply with rules and regulations (see Tyler 1990). That is, if respect is shown in a consistent and reliable way it exemplifies the reasonableness of the people demonstrating respectful behaviour, this in turn assists in building a sense of security within the prison. If an officer consistently acts respectfully toward inmates, he or she will be seen as a sensible and fair officer, and inmates will be more likely to listen to that officer and comply with his or her requests. If, on the other hand, respectful treatment of inmates is not consistent, or is not present at all, the effects can be especially damaging. One inmate when asked how the inmates interact with each other and with staff replied “It’s about respect really, if you have respect for them, they will have respect for you..... If you treat them with some respect then they’ll give it back to you.”

Aside from the security and order implications, respectful treatment by others in prisons is also important for psychological well-being. Festinger (1954) stated that in the absence of objective indicators of self-worth in social interactions, we turn to self-relevant information from others to judge our worth. This can constitute an important source of self-respect, self-value and self-esteem (e.g. Branscombe, Spears, Ellemers & Doosje, 2002). Within prison, people have few, if any, objective indicators of self-

worth and so their treatment by others is particularly important for their self-esteem and self-worth. Above all, their treatment by those in a position of authority can be very important for judgements of self-worth, self-esteem and sense of self (Tyler, Boeckmann, Smith & Huo, 1997; Lind & Tyler, 1988; and Tyler & Bladder 2000).

The Problem of Respect within English and Welsh Prisons

It is because inmates and prison staff may come from communities, or sub-communities, which emphasise different criteria by which people are deemed worthy of respect that respect-as-esteem may be difficult to achieve in prison. Inmates and prison staff alike generally tend to share the same values, beliefs and stereotypes as the community, or sub-community, from which they are a part. If an inmate is part of a community of peers that distrusts and dehumanises figures of public authority such as social workers, the police, prison staff, etc, then this will make it difficult for inmates to be moved to a feeling of respect-as-esteem for prison staff. In a similar manner, prison staff who are part of a community believing either that criminals are somehow sub-human and do not deserve respect, or that they have forfeited their right to respect by committing a criminal act may also experience difficulty in expressing respect-as-esteem for inmates. This is evident in the quote by Jenkins (1991) referred to earlier in this paper (that inmates have formally forfeited their right to respect). It is for these reasons that what we have called respect-as-esteem may be difficult to promote and achieve within the prison context.

In addition, prison confounds the inmate's shame of dependency as they are dependent on the prison staff to provide for their every need. Ahmed, Harris, Braithwaite and Braithwaite (2001) have distinguished between two types of shame:

reintegrative and stigmatizing shame. They argue that it is stigmatising shame which is responsible for deep rooted and long lasting feelings of antagonism because stigmatising shame reflects on the person's sense of self, while reintegrative shame reflects on their behaviour. Individuals exposed to forms of stigmatising shame and humiliation in society may be more sensitive to their treatment by others, as they may be more insecure in their sense of self and status within society. Inmates, therefore, may be particularly sensitive to their treatment by the prison, prison officers and other inmates as they may already be feeling ashamed, humiliated and devalued by society which is amplified when they are not treated respectfully.

In this way, respect-as-consideration is important for an individual's sense of self. We need to be treated respectfully in order to feel that our existence matters. Social identity theory states that a person's sense of self is composed from their social identity and their personal identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Tajfel, 1981). Social identity refers to how we are perceived by others, while personal identity refers to how we perceive ourselves. Our personal identity and social identity interact and influence one another (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Tajfel, 1981). In other words, if someone behaves respectfully towards us, this reflects positively on our social identity, as we are worthy of respect, but it also reflects well on our personal identity. If we perceive ourselves as beings worthy of respect, but other people consistently behave disrespectfully towards us, then this will create feelings of cognitive dissonance which we may attempt to deal with by: attempting to change their opinion; reassess our personal identity; devalue our opinion of those who are behaving disrespectfully towards us; or counterbalance these feelings of inferiority with

feelings of superiority in another area or by comparison with a different group (e.g. see Fiske & Taylor, 1991).

Sennett (2003) argued that a loss of confidence in yourself increases your awareness of the opinion of others. In other words, if you are unsure of your personal identity, you look to your social identity for guidance. He proposed “In places where resources are scarce and approval from the outside world is lacking, social honor, is fragile; it needs to be reasserted each day” (Sennett, 2003; p34). Prison is such a place. As a result of this, it would appear that people in a prison setting need to reassert their social honour, whenever it is threatened, due to the fragile nature of their sense of self. As stated earlier, Edgar et al., (2002) found that feeling wronged or feeling a threat to their status were amongst the commonest reasons given by inmates for engaging in interpersonal violence in English and Welsh prisons. Even arguments and violence arising over debts and drugs can fundamentally revolve around the issue of respect and our sense of self. One inmate, when asked why inmates fight over debts and drugs, responded “Respect ain’t it. Respect. Basically, if you don’t pay someone back other people will look at it and they’ll think “They are being taken for an idiot”, and other people will start taking you for an idiot. That’s what happens”.

These feelings of frustration, shame and humiliation are also relevant for prison staff, as prison staff may feel as if they are treated differentially depending upon their position within the Prison Service (Crawley 2004). This is another reason why respect-as-consideration is important within the Prison Service as it facilitates the construction of a clear, comprehensible set of guidelines for interacting with inmates and other prison staff. It would also facilitate the development of procedures which

could return a sense of agency to the inmates (and staff) to reduce their sense of shame at being totally dependent upon the prison staff, and the prison, in a similar manner to strengths based approaches to criminal justice. The strengths based, or restorative, approaches to criminal justice attempt to combat these feelings of passivity within dependency by symbolically turning the criminal into a “giver rather than a consumer of help” (Maruna & LeBel, 2003; p97). These approaches return a sense of agency to the person by not asking “what needs to be done to a person in response to an offence but rather what the person can accomplish to make amends for his or her actions” (Maruna & LeBel, 2003; p98). It is also important that legitimate opportunities are made available to both the inmates and prison staff to allow them to earn respect-as-esteem from their colleagues and peers, should they wish to. Such opportunities may help to develop within the person feelings of achievement and a sense of agency which may facilitate the process of desistance (e.g. Maruna, 2001).

It is necessary to mention briefly that the motivation behind respectful treatment is very important, particularly within prison due to power differentials. It is important that the expression of respect-as-consideration, (or respect-as-esteem, where possible), is genuine and not being used instrumentally to achieve compliance and/or desired goals. This is important as people form interpretations of the motives of others and if they believe that respect is being used as a means rather than an end, then this may undermine the positive effects of respect. Garland (1996, 1997) and Hannah-Moffat (2001) have highlighted the potential for ‘empowering techniques’ or other procedures designed to increase the inmate’s sense of autonomy, agency, and respect-as-esteem, to be used subtly to promote compliance rather than to truly acknowledge the person’s agency and autonomy. In a similar manner, inmates may use respect as a

means to achieve favours and/or other goals from other inmates and staff alike. In the words of one inmate “Yeah, you have got to sort of respect them to a degree because they hold the key”. If the benefits of respect are to be fully achieved then respectful treatment must be perceived as an end in itself as it is this use of respect that reflects positively on an individual’s sense of self.

Conclusion

The emphasis placed on respect by the inmates themselves indicates that importance of respectful treatment within the prison context, particularly with regard to the confrontations that occur in prison and the connection between respect and psychological well-being. Respect-as-consideration is important, for inmates and staff alike, as this is the minimal level of respect required for a healthy prison. Respectful treatment can improve the perceived legitimacy of the prison environment, reduce the occurrence of conflict within prison, and improve self-esteem and self-worth by impacting upon a person’s sense of self and informing the person about how they are perceived and regarded by others. This does not mean that respect-as-consideration is the only form of respect possible within the prison service. Rather opportunities should be provided within the prison service to allow both inmates and staff alike to obtain respect-as-esteem (e.g. Bazemore & Walgrave 1999). Respect-as-consideration should be seen as the minimal level of respect required for a decent and humane prison. If respect-as-consideration is consistently afforded to inmates, the Decency Agenda will, in part, be achieved and it will enhance the overall sense of the consistency of the regime. In this way, the legitimacy of the prison (as well as prison procedures) and the authority of prison officers will be enhanced. Further, inmates (and staff) will feel they are being treated fairly and that they are people of value.

The confusion surrounding the modern usage of the word respect undermines the Prison Service's attempt to promote the respectful treatment of inmates – an essential element to the Prison Service's current efforts to put forward a Decency Agenda. Respect-as-consideration is essential if the Prison Service's Statement of Purpose is to be achieved as it can provide clear, comprehensible guidelines for both inmates and staff alike, allowing them to form consistent expectations of behaviour, which are realisable. However, it is important that respect is used as an end in itself and not as a means to achieve compliance. It is this use of respectful treatment which is important as it can enhance the perceived legitimacy of the prison, prison staff and prison procedures, reduce the level of disturbances within the prison, improve psychological well-being, and impact upon the inmate's (and the staff's) sense of self. Respectful treatment also informs both inmates and staff of how they are perceived and regarded by others; this may be particularly important for those who are experiencing shame, humiliation, and who already feel devalued by society. Respect-as-consideration is a requirement of a healthy prison for both staff and inmates.

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